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EXTENSION SERVICE

# REVIEW

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE \* MAY 1970



# REVIEW

*The Extension Service Review is for Extension educators—in County, State, and Federal Extension agencies—who work directly or indirectly to help people learn how to use the newest findings in agriculture and home economics research to bring about a more abundant life for themselves and their communities.*

*The Review offers the Extension worker, in his role of educational leader, professional guideposts, new routes and tools for speedier, more successful endeavor. Through this exchange of methods, tried and found successful by Extension agents, the Review serves as a source of ideas and useful information on how to reach people and thus help them utilize more fully their own resources, to farm more efficiently, and to make the home and community a better place to live.*

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Prepared in  
Information Services  
Extension Service, USDA  
Washington, D. C. 20250

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The Extension Service Review is published monthly by direction of the Secretary of Agriculture as administrative information required for the proper transaction of the public business. Use of funds for printing this publication approved by the Director of the Bureau of the Budget (July 1, 1968).

The Review is issued free by law to workers engaged in Extension activities. Others may obtain copies from the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C., 20402, at 15 cents per copy or by subscription at \$1.50 a year, domestic, and \$2.25, foreign.

Reference to commercial products and services is made with the understanding that no discrimination is intended and no endorsement by the Department of Agriculture is implied.

*Official monthly publication of Cooperative Extension Service; U. S. Department of Agriculture and State Land-Grant Colleges and Universities cooperating.*

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## An ally for image-building

Last month's Extension Service Review recognized efforts by Extension workers in Illinois and New Jersey to explain agriculture to the public. Since then, a new group has been formed to lend a hand with the task. It is the National Educational Institute for Agriculture, a non-profit organization set up to improve agriculture's image.

The Institute's stated purpose is "the improvement of the image projected to urban consumers, the Congress, and the Executive Branch by agriculture in general and farmers in particular." Officers of the organization include agricultural producers and agribusinessmen from all over the United States.

With headquarters here in Washington, D.C., the National Educational Institute for Agriculture will have access to the largest concentration of news media representatives in the country. And they are on the doorstep of the Government officials they hope to reach.

The Institute can certainly make an important contribution to public understanding of agriculture, but the job is not theirs alone. Commodity groups and general farm organizations have long served as good image-builders for agriculture, and their help is needed more than ever. And a big part of the task must still be done by Extension workers and other representatives of agriculture who have daily opportunities for face-to-face communication with those who need to understand agriculture better.—MAW



# Project Rainfall

by  
Dean C. Bork  
*Extension 4-H Editor*  
*Michigan State University*

*Robert Osburn, the 4-H teen leader who organized and developed Project Rainfall, checks his weather recording station, above. Below, he shows a participant in the project how her rainfall recordings contributed to the countywide project.*

"Project Rainfall" is again underway in Lenawee County, Michigan. It's a unique and educational countywide 4-H project that also aids science.

"Project Rainfall" began 2 years ago because a 4-H member was interested in gaining local rainfall information. Robert Osburn, now a freshman at the University of Michigan majoring in meteorology, enlisted the aid of 4-H members and other youth to measure rainfall in every area of the county.

The first year, 21 young people participated in the project. More than 50 were involved in "Project Rainfall—1969."

No special meteorological equipment was required. The only equipment 4-H members needed to participate in the project was an ordinary rain gauge.

The project began March 30 and continued through October 31. Rainfall recordings were made twice daily—at 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. Every 2 weeks a card with the rainfall observations was mailed to Osburn.



Osburn then plotted maps of the county with isohyets (lines of equal rainfall). Participants met regularly to see how their efforts contributed to the countywide project and to learn more about weather observation and recording.

"Project Rainfall" participants hope to eventually have at least one rainfall recorder in each 5-square-mile area of the county to improve data collecting and validity.

State climatologist Norton Strommen and Les Mack, youth specialist for the Michigan State University agricultural engineering department, are both interested in the project. They note that the project can reveal more detailed rainfall patterns than normally obtained from the regular U.S. Weather Bureau rainfall observation network. These detailed rainfall statistics could prove valuable for scientists and farmers, they believe.

"However, the educational benefit to the participating young people is probably much greater than the scientific benefit," points out William Walter, Extension 4-H youth agent.

Through "Project Rainfall," many young people have built their own weather stations and learned to use them in making accurate weather observations and measurements.

Though Osburn no longer provides active leadership for "Project Rainfall," he still helps give guidance to the project which he hopes will continue to expand under new teen leaders. □

by  
James E. Lawrence  
*Extension Communication Coordinator*  
*Cornell University*

## Multiplying Extension efforts

Characterizing Cooperative Extension as "helping people help themselves" may appear to be an oversimplification of a somewhat complex and diverse educational system. But to a group of Orange County, N.Y., commercial farmers whose survival depends on their ability to hold and strengthen their place in the agricultural mainstream, this familiar expression is the key to past successes and future expectations.

Their approach to using the problem-solving techniques of Extension goes even a bit further. It involves what agricultural agent Horace A. Smith, Jr., calls a "sense of urgency" among growers and those who share their goals and aspirations.

Smith's work with producers, researchers, industry leaders, and Extension personnel over a period of several years has welded this concern into a unified program, directed to improving the competitive position of those who till the county's muckland, or "black dirt," soils.

Largely through his efforts, this coalition has encouraged growers to do more for themselves through leadership development, pooling of local resources, participating in decisions that affect the industry, and supporting activities designed for the common good.

"By closing ranks in this manner," explains Smith, "growers have been able to focus more critically on the specific problems and trends that influence their production and markets. Also, it increases my efficiency in working with their organization, the Orange County Vegetable Improvement Cooperative Association, since producer interests and concerns are concentrated in the leader-



*Benefits of research are measured in higher onion yields by vegetable farmer Stanley Wiecek, right, and agricultural agent Horace Smith, Jr. Wiecek is president of the county's grower association.*

ship. Practically every grower is a member, so I have a direct line to a target audience."

Smith finds that the leadership is especially receptive to keeping abreast of industry developments and seeing that growers are fully informed. Their approval and appreciation of Extension's educational role shows up dramatically in the turnouts for field meetings and tours, the feedback from direct mail

materials, and the high adoption rate accorded research-based ideas and methods.

Further, he finds that this effective working relationship allows time and energy to handle the large volume of office, phone, and field calls that deal with the muckland industry, and also to carry on his active program for the area's upland vegetable growers.



*A Cornell graduate student inspects an onion storage experiment at the grower association's research laboratory.*

In this type of environment, notes Smith, growers view Extension as a dynamic force capable of compounding grassroot efforts. Its multiplier effects are visible through the agent's ability to tap a wide range of backup resources and to sharpen the community's awareness of its agricultural resources.

As one grower put it, "Extension is more than helping people help themselves. It is also helping us provide our own opportunities for more help."

Evidence of this viewpoint is the association's research laboratory, constructed about 5 years ago with money donated by growers and contributed from various fundraising activities. Its purpose is to facilitate and encourage intensive research directed to muckland crops.

Results of research conducted there are available to growers throughout the State. Researchers at Cornell, the land-

grant university, have complete use of the facilities. Maintenance and operational costs are borne by the growers.

Since the completion of the laboratory, a second structure has been built on the association's property. Equipped with wind tunnels, heaters, and automatic control units, it is a combination research and storage building.

Plans for the design and other considerations were developed by Extension specialists in agricultural engineering and plant pathology. The structure is used primarily for the study of onion storage problems.

In addition, the association makes an annual grant to Cornell for a graduate student to augment research on onions. This practice was started a decade ago when the association was formed, and has been continued each year since then.

"Local participation of this type portends a healthy outlook for New York's commercial agriculture," observes Jim L. Ozbun, vegetable crops professor and assistant director of the Cornell Agricultural Experiment Station. "It's the kind of decisive action that represents a tangible equity from which to build solid support for an industry. We expect to see more developments like this in other segments of agriculture."

The focal point of Extension's program for these vegetable growers is some 13,000 acres devoted to fresh vegetable production. The area is one of the Nation's largest continuous muckland basins. It is located near the New York-New Jersey border, about 50 miles from New York City.

Being this close to the world's largest market means certain advantages to the growers, but it also guarantees lively competition from fellow growers in other parts of the State and across the Nation.

Some 300 farm families gain all or part of their livelihood from the onions, lettuce, celery, and sod produced on these rich, deep organic soils. The main crop, for which Cornell economists see a bright future, is onions.

Predictions to the year 1985 cite onions as one of the State's leading fresh vegetables for major increases in produc-

tion and crop value. This encouraging note gives a tremendous morale boost to everyone concerned with the county's muckland industry.

Stanley Wiecek, president of the growers' association, likes to emphasize the give and take necessary to blend Extension know-how with activities at the local level. "We know," he points out, "that our operations center on what might be termed minority crops when you look at the State's total agricultural picture. So we must be alert to supply the leadership for programs we need and to call on those who can help us when we reach the limit of our resources.

"Basically, our partnership arrangement with Extension covers two points. One is a down-to-earth appraisal of what we actually need to stay in business and continue to grow. The other is going out and doing as much as we can for ourselves."

Smith fills major roles in this relationship, particularly in working closely with Wiecek, other industry leaders, and individual growers to supply information necessary for sound decisions. Trends, goals, problems, and recommendations are constantly reviewed. Research findings and technical material from Extension specialists and researchers at Cornell are watched closely.

The skillful use of field trials, tours, workshops, clinics, organizational activities, demonstrations, and various communication media account in large measure for the viability of this long-range cooperative effort.

But this is not the complete story. It is part of the larger story of agriculture's ability to cope with a free-wheeling society whose daily gyrations are reshaping traditions and attitudes as never before.

Horace Smith, as a professional with strong convictions about truly helping the people he serves, knows the penalty of getting caught in a backwater. His dedication to the county's vegetable farmers and their "sense of urgency" in helping themselves have combined to make Extension mean more than education for action. In this case, it is a blueprint for survival. □

# New income from hogs in Mississippi

by  
Tommy Wilkerson  
*Extension Information Specialist  
Mississippi State University*

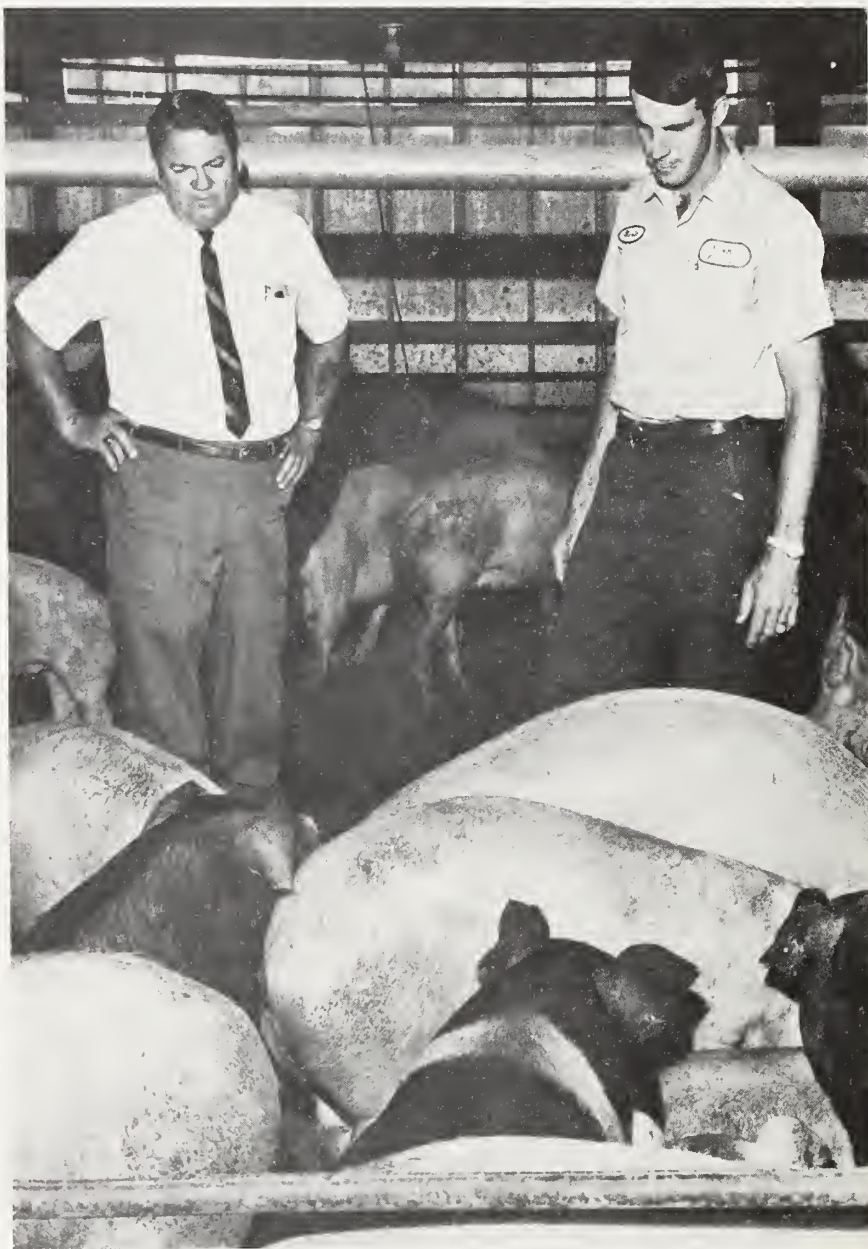
Farmers in Alcorn County, Mississippi, are finding that feeding hogs to top market weight will result in new money, says County Agent Percy Hodges.

Through Hodges' efforts a half million dollars in new money was added in 1969 boosting the total county income from hog production to a million and a half dollars.

"Feeding hogs is ideally suited to our agricultural situation," he says. "We have many part-time farmers and it is

reliably estimated that 70 percent of all our rural families have one or more adult members of the family working in industry. Swine production is an ideal source of supplemental income for these families, especially feeding hogs for market, as it is not too time-consuming."

In promoting hog feeding, Hodges and his staff regularly drop hints to farmers who they think will benefit from adding this enterprise. Nearly all of the radio programs conducted by the agriculture



agents have at least a small portion devoted to hog production.

"And you'd be surprised at how much help an aggressive feed dealer can be in promoting expansion in hog feeding," the county agent added.

The county agent took several of his farmers on a tour of hog feeding facilities in Tennessee. Interest jumped, resulting in the addition of nine hog feeding barns in 1969 with a total capacity of 8,300 top hogs. This brought the number of new feeding barns to 12. All are of modern design. Many have heating cables in combination concrete floors and slats. Others have total wood slats. Most of the new barns are constructed with a lagoon system.

Besides these large operations, about 40 percent of the Alcorn County market hogs are fed out on the ground in smaller numbers. This presents a real challenge, Hodges said.

He predicts that hog feeding and construction of new feeding barns will increase about 30 percent again this year. The county Extension staff is already working with producers on three new barns—one to hold 1,000 top hogs, one 800, and one 250.



*At left, County Agent Percy Hodges advises Martin Huggins about the operations in his feeding barn. 4-H is an important part of the county's total hog program, too. Above, Associate County Agent Wayne Hughey visits with Jerry and Johnny Allen.*

"We have one of the best top hog markets in the State right here in our county, where we get the top dollar for our animals. Each week 800 to 1,300 top hogs are sold through this facility," he said.

"The projection for favorable meat animal prices over the next few years should stimulate further increases in meat animal production."

The feeding out of top market hogs is only a part of County Agent Hodges' total swine production program for Alcorn County. Feeder pigs sold through organized feeder pig sales and direct-from-the-farm sales bring in an additional \$220,000 annually to growers.

In helping to upgrade the quality of hogs produced in the county, he and other staff members are working on a cooperative program with the Tennessee Valley Authority. They place top quality boars in neighborhoods for use by small producers who may not be financially able to buy the type boar needed. When the boar has completed his usefulness, he is sold and replaced. A small breeding fee is charged to pay for upkeep of the boar.

Also in cooperation with TVA, he and his producers participate in hog production seminars—one 2-hour session once a week for 4 to 6 weeks covering all phases of hog production. This usually takes place during the winter.

The local swine producers association is promoting for the first time a commercial gilt sale to include both open and breed gilts. The first such sale is scheduled for May 1970.

While predicting the continued increases in market hog production, Hodges sees little or no drop in acreages of such crops as cotton and soybeans.

"Rather than replacing other crops, we expect our hogs and commercial vegetable production to supply additional income," he stated.

The five purebred hog breeders in Alcorn County are another important part of the total hog production program. They produce Duroc, Hampshire, and Yorkshire breeds. Income from sale of purebred breeding stock last year totaled nearly \$88,000.

The problems Hodges has encountered in stepping up the production of market hogs include inadequate housing facilities during extreme weather, lack of records on feeding and feed conversion, and difficulties in manure handling.

The local radio stations and a local daily newspaper have been extremely cooperative in the drive to find new agricultural income, the agent says.

"We have regularly scheduled radio programs and the stations are happy to run spot announcements as well," he said. "The local newspaper works with us closely."

To further create awareness among the general public on agricultural progress in the county, Hodges and his associates Walter Deen and Wayne Hughey arrange programs for seven civic clubs and six rural community development clubs. In these, as well as outlining progress made locally, they detail the relationships between Mississippi State University, the Cooperative Extension Service, local members of the legislature, and the local Board of Supervisors. A quarterly letter reporting progress in a particular enterprise is mailed to each local member of the legislature by Agent Hodges. □

# Wildlife education—

a growing job

by  
J. David Almand  
*Wildlife Specialist*  
*Extension Service, USDA*



Educational programs about wildlife have been a part of the Cooperative Extension Service for over three decades. Progress has been slow, but steady. And during the next decade, Extension commitments to fish, wildlife, and marine related programs will at least double.

Why is this so? First, fish and wildlife are playing an increasing role in supplementing the income of farmers and others through the sale of hunting and fishing privileges, fur farming, fish bait production, fish farming, and a number of other fish and wildlife related enterprises.

Also, the esthetic values of wildlife are becoming more widely recognized. Fish and wildlife problems are receiving increased consideration in the location and operation of industrial facilities and in land use planning and zoning. Legislators throughout the country are giving broader support to fish and wildlife programs. Wildlife is often a measure of the quality of our environment.

Finally, concern is increasing about the species of wildlife which sometimes cease to be an asset. Blackbirds can ruin a farmer's sweet corn or small grain crop; rats and mice can destroy his stored grain and feeds, girdle his apple trees, or create serious health hazards; and starlings can contaminate cattle feedlots, seriously damage cherry or grape crops, or become a public nuisance or health hazard by congregating by the millions in their winter roosts.

In some sections of the country, deer prevent forest regeneration by eating tree seedlings; beavers create problems by flooding bottomland fields or roads; pocket gophers tunnel through farmers' fields and pasture lands creating hazards for livestock and equipment; and coyotes occasionally prey on the farmers' livestock.

In short, practically every American family could be reached by some phase of Extension wildlife education.

The Cooperative Extension Service is adjusting to these new challenges. We have about 50 fish, wildlife, or marine specialists in 25 States. State Extension Directors in the 25 States without a wildlife specialist recently designated a

member of their staff to handle wildlife educational materials and to serve as contacts for specialists in other States. I am confident that each State will eventually have at least one fish and wildlife specialist.

It could be argued that we are already behind schedule in committing resources to educational programs concerning fish, wildlife, and marine resources. But we are moving, and in so doing, we are arousing a sleeping giant. We are reaching audiences and establishing relationships that previously have been either overlooked or ignored. As a result, we are broadening friendships and support of Extension programs, a vital requirement if we are to develop and maintain effective and meaningful programs for all the people.

To provide a better understanding of Extension's fish and wildlife activities, I recently conducted a comprehensive review of State activities. The overall program has been broken into 17 categories. Because of their complex and interwoven relationships, however, it is difficult to draw lines between the categories.

Following is a brief review of each:

**Habitat management for game and non-game:** includes all work related to the manipulation of wildlife habitat, including food and cover, for the purpose of enhancing or discouraging wildlife in a specific area.

**Landowner-sportsmen relations:** includes all work related to improving the relationship between landowners and sportsmen, including work with State Wildlife Federations, sportsmen's and wildlife-oriented clubs, landowner and other civic groups, and related activities.

**Pesticides and pollution:** includes all work related to proper, safe, and judicious use of pesticides and their effect upon the environment, particularly fish and wildlife.

**Fish pond management:** all work relating to fish pond management, including construction, poisoning, stocking, fertilizing, weed control, and fishing.

**Marine resources education:** all work relating to the wise use and management

of marine resources. Six States are engaged in this program area.

**Commercial fishing industry (marine):** all work relating to the marine fisheries, including economics, harvesting, processing, marketing, and utilization. Only two States are doing significant work.

**Sea Grant Program:** only three State Extension Services are engaged in this program (Oregon, Texas, and Delaware). Delaware devotes a portion of 1 man-year to the program; Texas, about 4 man-years, primarily in the area of shellfish farming; and Oregon, about 9 man-years in their newly established Marine Section.

**Fee fishing:** all work relating to the income-producing aspects of fresh water fishing.

**Fee hunting:** all work relating to the income-producing aspects of hunting, including shooting preserves, daily and seasonal hunting leases, etc.

**Game bird production:** includes all work relating to commercial production of game birds for shooting preserve operations or similar enterprises. Such work is conducted closely with Extension poultry specialists.

**Fur farming:** all work relating to the production of fur animals and management of fur farming enterprises. Five States are doing some work in this area, one with a full-time specialist.

**Fish bait production:** all work related to the commercial or hobby production of minnows, worms, crickets, or other types of fish bait.

**Catfish farming:** all work relating to catfish farming, including production and management of fish farming operations, harvesting, processing, marketing, and utilization.

**Trout farming:** same as for catfish, except trout is the species involved.

**Shellfish farming:** same as for catfish and trout, except crawfish, shrimp, or other forms of shellfish are involved.

**Animal damage control:** all educational work relating to minimizing and controlling agricultural crop losses from depredating wildlife. Twenty-seven States are giving emphasis to this area, three of which employ five full-time

specialists in this field. A great deal of cooperative work also is conducted with the Interior Department's Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, Division of Wildlife Services.

**4-H wildlife activities:** 46 States have wildlife projects, but the program varies from State to State. We need to broaden the base of the program to appeal to more youth from a wider range of backgrounds and environments. Enrollment in the wildlife project was 103,602 in 1968.

Although the Extension fish and wildlife activities vary from State to State, common bonds connect them. Basically, the role of the fish and wildlife specialist is to provide leadership to all Extension programs related to fish and wildlife, including 4-H and other youth programs. This includes the training of county Extension agents to more effectively help farmers, landowners, and other citizens and groups to develop, manage, and properly use fish and wildlife resources for economic returns or other reasons.

The fish and wildlife education being conducted by most of our State Extension Services is among the most important and impressive fish and wildlife work underway in this country. It is also among the least understood. But a new day is dawning, and the future looks bright. □

*This is the first in a series of articles about Extension's responsibilities for educating the public about wildlife. Next month—Oklahoma's methods for teaching young people about wildlife conservation.*

by  
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and  
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## Poppie clubs—4-H for the younger set

"Just what is this Poppie organization I've been hearing about?" the voice on the phone wanted to know. "Is it some kind of flower power group?"

Mrs. Sally Valentiner, Frederick County, Maryland, Extension agent, laughingly assured the caller that the Poppie Youth Organization, despite any connotation of the word Poppie, had nothing in common with flower power.

Yet, the Poppie Youth Organization, a pre-4-H program in Frederick County, is concerned with power—the power of youth to grow and develop into mature and responsible adults. The name Poppie was chosen to represent youth, growth, and development.

The Poppie program is a unique project for the State. It is organized and directed by the Extension Service as an introduction to 4-H for 6-, 7-, and 8-year-old boys and girls, who are too young for regular 4-H Clubs.

The first Poppie Club was started in 1965 by a 4-H Junior Leader, Sandy Sue Smith, who was concerned about children who wanted to participate in 4-H but were too young. After talking and planning with the 4-H and youth agent, she began a Poppie Club for children in her neighborhood. Sandy Sue's mother, Mrs. J. Howard Smith, is currently the county Poppies coordinator.

Last year, when there were only two Poppie Clubs, the Frederick Extension Service set a goal—to establish 10 clubs before 1970. They reached their goal, and did even better. By January 1970, Frederick County had 13 Poppie Clubs with 29 leaders and more than 200 mem-

bers. The Poppies are really growing!

The Poppie program tries to stimulate an interest in 4-H type activities, making it a stepping stone to the 4-H program. In one case, it led to the formation of a new 4-H Club called the Pop-Overs. This club is made up of Poppies who become old enough to "pop over" into real 4-H Club work. Present plans are for an annual Pop-Over night for all Poppies ready to graduate to 4-H.

The Poppies meet twice a month for an hour. Half of the program includes crafts, skills, or movies, and the other half is recreation, games, singing, and refreshments. The clubs steer away from any projects costing money. They try to use everyday items, such as boxes, cans, and material scraps. They make banks from bleach bottles, pencil holders from juice cans, and waste cans from potato chip cartons.



*Members of the East Frederick all-boy Poppie Club, above, make their own birdhouses. At left is Sandy Sue Smith, founder of the first Poppie Club.*

Poppies also take field trips and work on community service activities. Currently, they are working with the Frederick City Day Care Center for handicapped children. Each month a Poppie leader and several club representatives or an entire club take favors, flower arrangements, and games to the children.

The Poppies learn about good grooming, cleanliness, and healthful living. They learn about their community and its needs. The Poppies, like 4-H members, work with their hands, their heads, and their hearts.

The coordinator and Extension agent also try to include the Poppies in some 4-H activities. Last year, the Poppies had an exhibit in the 4-H building at the Frederick Fair, although they were not in competition. Their display included many of their craft projects as well as an explanation of what the Poppies are.

At the Frederick County 4-H Camp-

fire, they presented a program on "What Are Poppies" to an audience of 700 4-H'ers, leaders, and workers. This summer, the children will spend one night at Camp Greentop in Thurmont, as an introduction to 4-H camping.

The East Frederick Poppies is an active, all-boy club. When asked what they like about the Poppies, one boy replied, "I like the Poppies because we make important stuff. I like the boys." Another boy said emphatically, "I like being with boys. Girls make my stomach icky!" A unique feature of the program is that 50 percent of the Poppie members are boys.

Another club is for the mentally retarded children at Harmony Grove School in Frederick. While learning elementary cleanliness, health, and manners, these children experience a much needed and much neglected aspect of their lives—that of belonging to a community club and participating in group activities.

The top volunteer leader, called the county Poppies' coordinator, is elected by the Poppies' leaders for a 2-year term. She starts new clubs, recruits leaders, conducts quarterly leader meetings, and promotes the organization.

A steering committee of seven Poppie leaders is also elected for a 2-year term. The coordinator serves as an ex officio member of the committee.

Each Poppie Club has a leader who plans and conducts meetings and activities, promotes the organization, and attends quarterly leader meetings. Both men and women serve as leaders in Frederick. Almost every club also has a 4-H Junior Leader working with it. In fact, several Junior Leaders have organized their own Poppie Club.

Many community organizations have become interested in the Poppies. The Urbana Lions Club, for example, thinks that the program is such a good idea that it donated \$50 to the organization to be used for county Poppie events.

The Poppie program has been especially effective in urban areas, where previous attempts to establish 4-H Clubs were not successful. It has also helped the image of 4-H, by expanding its scope and promotion.

But what do the parents think about the Poppies?

They all seem to have the same opinion—"It's just great!" They talk about the pride their children feel in bringing home a completed project. They like for their children to work and play with a supervised group of children of their own age. And they are impressed with the worthwhile educational opportunities offered.

But most important, their children think it's great, too. □



*At a Poppie Club meeting, left, mentally retarded children at Harmony Grove School in Frederick learn the proper way to set a table.*

If you live in McClain County, Oklahoma, chances are pretty good that your name is on one of County Extension Director Charles Phelps' mailing lists.

And if your name is on one of the lists, you can bet that it's there for a definite reason.

Phelps says his lists are made up to allow him and other members of his staff to make selective mailings. "About 7 or 8 years ago I was opening my mail one morning and throwing most of it away with hardly a glance," he said. "And it dawned on me that our mail probably got the same treatment in a good number of cases."

So, he set out to make an envelope from the County Extension Center mean something.

The breakdown of addressing machine stencils in the office includes beef cattle, dairy, swine, cotton, wheat, peanuts, 4-H leaders and federation officers, Extension homemakers, and local leaders. Naturally, there is some duplication. One of the community leaders, for instance, might also be a beef producer or wheat grower.

When you go into the lists a little

deeper, you find that each list may be broken down into specialized groups. In the beef list—which contains about 300 names—you find a breakdown as to the type of operation. By selecting color tabs, secretaries in the office may contact either the county's Angus breeders, Hereford breeders, cow-calf operators or stocker-feeder producers.

The mailing lists are made up in a variety of ways. First, a daily log is kept in the office of all visitors and phone calls. This log gives the name and address of the caller or visitor and the information he or she wanted.

"We use this log for a number of purposes," Phelps says. "It's especially helpful in making up short course mailing lists and it's good for just about any kind of report you have to make."

Such short courses, themselves, help keep the lists current. The courses usually run four sessions and during the second and fourth session a list is passed around for those in attendance to sign.

"This shows who was there and goes into a permanent file," Phelps explained. "Then we know who was interested in the subject and use this information to keep our mailing lists current."

Phelps estimates it requires about half a day per year to keep the mailing lists up to date.

Making up an effective mailing list is something of an art in itself. For instance, in making up his beef cattle list, Phelps contacted 27 community leaders and asked them to supply a list of everyone in their communities who was interested in beef, what their cattle were, and about how many they had.

As a followup, he checked the county tax rolls for everyone with more than 35 head.

When he made up his dairy list, he contacted the county sanitarian, who keeps an accurate, up-to-date list of all grade A dairymen in the county.

His cotton list came basically from the two local gins, which supplied names of folks who had cotton ginned the previous year. When he wants to contact everyone in the county who just might be interested in something in the cotton area, he checks the local ASCS rolls for cotton allotments.

His wheat and peanut lists come mainly from the ASCS rolls. The 4-H leaders' list is broken into two groups—organizational and project leaders. The membership list comes from the 4-H members' enrollment cards.

The Extension homemakers list comes from club enrollments and is used to mail out a monthly newsletter to all members. But broken down, this same list allows the center personnel to contact just the club officers or the voluntary leaders.

To make up a swine mailing list, Phelps surveyed area feed dealers for

### Specialize mailing lists—

## Don't send 'junk mail'

by

Jack Drummond

*Associate Extension Editor  
Oklahoma State University*

the names of those folks who regularly bought hog feed. With this start, he asked the swine growers for names of other producers in the county.

In addition to his regular mailing lists, Phelps has a group of special lists, some containing only a few names, that are used occasionally. These include, for example, garden club presidents, sportsmen's group members, and commercial fish producers. These lists, used less often than the regular lists, are kept in a special notebook.

By knowing the audience so well, Phelps and other members of the staff often are able to plan far ahead in their programs.

For example, prior to a recent stocker-feeder short course, Phelps was able to prepare five letters directed to interested persons—all at the same time. These letters were mimeographed and stuffed in addressed envelopes all the same day. Then, as the session to which they referred came up on the calendar, the office secretary mailed out the group of pertinent letters.

"Doing a group of letters all at one time like this saves a lot of time and helps avoid possible delays," Phelps says.

Phelps believes by a selective mailing system, he and the center staff can not only do a better job of contacting their audience but also save expense and time. Cost of such a program, he says, is not a big factor.

Basically, the mechanical equipment in the office includes an electric typewriter, an addressing machine, a folding machine, and a mimeograph machine.

"What we've tried to do the past 7 or 8 years is to take our letters out of the 'junk mail' class," Phelps said. "We hope a letter from our office will be welcomed by our cooperators as a source of information that will benefit them in whatever program they are involved." □



*Above, County Extension Director Charles Phelps discusses a mailing with office secretary Mrs. Margie Cheek. Modern, high-speed duplicating equipment makes mailings easier. At right, Mrs. Jean Greene checks a letter hot off the mimeograph.*



by  
David D. Olson  
*County Extension Director*  
*Oscoda County, Michigan*

## Educating absentee landowners

One of the primary educational problems facing northern Michigan Extension agents is how to involve owners of private forest land in educational programs that will cause a change in forest land management.

Most owners of small tracts of forest land are residents of downstate urban centers and are not generally using good land management techniques.

Private individuals or groups of individuals own two-thirds of the forest land in Michigan, and visit or use their forest properties irregularly.

Recent absentee owner studies showed that fewer than 17 percent of private owners have been involved in any land management educational programs.

Michigan offers a wide variety of free management services. The Cooperative Extension Service has offices in 79 counties, with a natural resources program oriented toward land management educational efforts. Soil Conservation District personnel work with cooperators on many phases of soil and water problems.

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources does on-the-ground technical forestry work, and has a large staff of foresters available to work on private forests. Federal cost sharing programs for forest land improvement are administered by the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service.

Private pulp mills offer cooperating landowners an intensive management service as part of their hunting club programs. The tree farm system operates in Michigan, and many foresters from both the public and private sector assist in the certification. A number of forest consultants work on a fee basis,

and are successful in promoting forest land management for small numbers of owners.

The problem of involving private owners in educational programs which will lead to concrete action has plagued foresters for many years. A fundamental lack of knowledge of ecology by private owners has contributed to the slow process of improving forest land management.

A new type of educational venture, recognizing the problems of private ownership, seemed a necessity for absentee owners.

Lester Bell, State Extension Forester; Charles Shick, Extension Wildlife Specialist; and David Olson, County Extension Director, decided that because so few absentee owners participated in demonstrations and tours in the northern forest areas, the educational program should be offered in the urban areas where the owners live.

Three counties in the AuSable River basin were selected for the initial effort since a large area of forest land there is owned by urban Michigan residents.

The county agents in Alcona, Iosco, and Oscoda Counties prepared mailing lists of absentee owners of 10 or more acres. Tax rolls provided a list of owners within 40 miles of metropolitan Detroit. This list contained the names of over 1,000 Detroit residents who own land in the three AuSable Counties.

The Extension staff in the Detroit area, Wayne County, arranged for a large, centrally located meeting room and prepared mass media publicity. Invitations were mailed to the people on the compiled mailing lists, and the general public was also invited.

Two consecutive evening meetings, one week apart, comprised the absentee landowner short course.

The first meeting dealt with general land management opportunities in northern Michigan, including hobby land management, northern Michigan forest resources, managing different timber types, and services available to private landowners.

The 275 owners who attended the first session picked up over 1,000 bulletins on land management and forestry. They also received a small directory describing the services available for owners in the AuSable River basin.

The second meeting had 220 owners in attendance and the topics covered were Water Resources, Managing Water On Your Lands, Improving Water Quality and Aquatic Weed Control, Fish Stocking, and Your Legal Water Rights.

Extension agents, specialists, and university researchers served as resource people. Each session included an open question and answer period with the speakers acting as a panel. The audience reaction was very favorable and it was necessary to end the discussions late each evening.

A second shortcourse near Saginaw, Michigan, followed a similar method in developing mailing lists and using mass media advertising as well as direct invitations.

This mailing list contained names of 277 owners in six AuSable River counties.

The subject matter for these meetings was identical to the first series held in Detroit. Ninety-one landowners at-

tended the first meeting and 86 were present at the second.

David Olson, Oscoda County Extension director, assumed responsibility for the absentee owner program after the Detroit meetings.

In 1968-69 "Land Use and the Small Landowner" shortcourses were held in Detroit, Saginaw, Flint, and Pontiac. The four evening meetings at each location served as a followup to the initial meetings in 1967.

Subject matter included: Soil and Water--The Basis of Land Use; Managing Your Land for Timber, Game, and Fish; Selling Forest Products; and Assistance Programs for Absentee Landowners.

Resource people were from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Michigan State University. Each meeting included 2 hours of formal presentations and an hour of panel discussions and questions.

Attendance at the 16 sessions averaged 125. The audiences were very responsive and seemed deeply interested in the program material.

These meetings relied primarily on mass media publicity in the urban areas.

A questionnaire at each location determined information on property size, location, land use, and owner attitudes. Landowners attending the shortcourse owned property in 48 northern counties and had an average of 177 acres each. The primary reasons for owning their property were hunting, fishing, and camping, with a low interest in forest management.

Over 48 percent of the respondents

indicated a desire to retire in the northern counties. Sixty-three percent of the owners had no previous contact with public agencies dealing in land management activities.

It is impossible to evaluate the immediate increase in proper land management activities in northern Michigan. Offices located in the AuSable River area, however, report a significant increase in contacts with absentee owners.

One group of 55 private hunting clubs, controlling over 15,000 acres of forest land, requested a special meeting on land management methods.

Another large hunting club requested assistance from the Extension Service, and adopted a long-term management program as a result of a series of on-the-ground visits.

An evaluation questionnaire was sent to shortcourse participants at the end of 1969, allowing one summer and fall for activity on the land.

Seventy percent of those responding had carried out some land management

activity since the shortcourse. Most felt the shortcourse had assisted them in planning their management program.

Only 45 percent of those responding had no contact with a public land management agency, versus a figure of 63 percent prior to the course.

Most of the absentee owners have little contact with agricultural programs. They do not understand Government assistance programs, and previously had little or no contact with the Cooperative Extension Service.

This is a new clientele for the Extension Service. They need educational assistance in land management, and the technique of holding "absentee owner" meetings in urban areas can supply the information.

Michigan State University plans a major effort in absentee owner meetings for 1970 in several metropolitan areas.

Many States might find this technique useful in improving the quality of management on forest and recreational lands. □



*Discussing land management proposals for a 7,000-acre club are Jack Adams, left, manager of the property, and David D. Olson, Oscoda County Extension Director.*



## Are you ready?

Imagination ranks among the great gifts to mankind. Indeed, it is one of the major characteristics that distinguish man from other animal life.

All men have this gift. Too few of us are able to make it work. Many of us just haven't disciplined ourselves to think and plan imaginatively. Evidence of this is the fact that some of us achieve a more favored status among our fellowmen and our fellow workers than others.

Fear of the unknown inhibits imaginative thinking: fear to strike out in new directions, fear of failure, fear of criticism or ridicule. Lack of enthusiasm and dedication—looking upon our work as a job and paycheck rather than as a challenge—also inhibits imaginative thinking.

One pragmatic view of imaginative thinking is that it is the development and consideration of the whole host of alternatives that offer solutions to a problem or ways to develop an opportunity. Without imagination, a lot of energy may be expended in adapting an alternative to a situation for which

at best it is poorly suited. New thrusts come from consideration of the full range of alternatives that may lead to progress and accomplishment.

Imaginative thinking is the ingredient that propels some Extension workers to meaningful programing while others are content to provide an "answering service." It is the sparkplug that motivates men to tackle the "impossible" and the fuel that drives them that little bit longer to achieve it.

Pragmatically, imaginative thinking is many other things. It is the seed that leads to the conceiving, developing, testing, and adapting of new methods. It is the seed with which we make full use of new knowledge. Many others can be listed.

More than ever before, Extension abounds with opportunities for imaginative thinking. We have many new challenges—we can "head them off at the pass" before they develop into crises. Our publics are receptive to the kinds of ideas created through imaginative thinking.

The time is now!—WJW